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Automotive News

January 27, 1986

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GM's new look in Europe

NADA

New Orleans to set record for turnout

By Edward Lapham
Marketing Editor

Some 18,000 franchised car and truck dealers, and other auto industry representatives, will descend on New Orleans later this week for the 69th annual NADA convention, Feb. 1-4.

NADA said it will be the "largest NADA convention in history in terms of participants, exhibits and workshops."

Highlighting this year's convention will be addresses by Vice President George Bush, Ford Chairman Donald Petersen and and U.S. Chamber of Commerce Chairman Frank Morsani.

Also during the convention, Northern California Ford/Chrysler-Plymouth dealer James B. Woulfe will replace Southern California Cadillac dealer William J. Symes as NADA president.

In addition to the usual round of informal socializing and the 144,000-square-foot exhibition area with exhibits by 215 suppliers, there will be 146 seminars on 43 topics and make meetings to discuss factory-dealer relations.

Likely to be among the hottest seminars this year are those dealing with selling cars to women, managing multi-franchise organizations, computerization and improving customer satisfaction.

The workshops are divided into four general categories: Business management, general management, sales and lease and service. The workshops will begin Sunday morning in the New Orleans Convention Center.

"We are very excited about the future of the automotive industry

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GM bidding for Leyland truck unit

By Richard Feast
European Editor

LONDON.—General Motors—determined to increase its share of Europe's commercial vehicle business—has focused on Leyland Vehicles, the long-time money-losing truck and bus division of state-owned BL.

An announcement is expected shortly.

What is not clear is whether Leyland alone is up for sale or whether it is being offered with a carrot: The sister Land Rover group with which it is paired. It is Land Rover that makes the luxury Range Rover station wagon, which is scheduled to bow in the U.S. this year.

GM's focus on Leyland Vehicles follows its review of other commercial-vehicle makers. It looked at Pegaso truck builder Enasa, owned by the Spanish state government, but backed away. Then it was dispatched by the West German establishment when it looked at acquiring MAN.

British Government policy is to sell off unwanted state assets. Jaguar was floated, and the Unipart component division may be the next part of BL to go.

The Austin Rover Group's long-term future is far from clear, although it has established design and manufacturing links with Honda.

Land Rover, together with its van-making Freight Rover subsidiary, has historically been a success. It ran into difficulties when Third World sales slumped, but a major reorganization and a switch in emphasis toward more stable Western markets seems about to return it to a sound footing. It is a self-contained and autonomous maker dedicated to four-wheel-drive vehicles and is a substantial exporter.

On the other hand, Leyland Vehicles, with which it is bracketed

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Chrysler's tough road

Chrysler Corp.'s Arizona Proving Grounds near Wittmann include 10 miles of rugged gravel and paved road around the perimeter of the 3,812-acre site. Severe dips along the north side of the road restrict speeds to 15 MPH to prevent vehicle damage. Story from the dedication of the proving grounds is on Page 3.

GM purchases British performance-car firm

General Motors has purchased 58 percent of Group Lotus, the British engineering and performance car manufacturing company, for about $20 million and has made a public offer to buy the rest.

GM paid the equivalent of about $1.80 per share for its stake in Lotus and offered the same price in its public offering for the outstanding shares, making the entire transaction potentially worth about $32 million.

Insiders say GM also is interested in acquiring the Lotus racing team, a separate entity not owned by, but associated with, Group Lotus. The racing team and Lotus name would boost GM's international image.

GM said it was interested in Lotus for its engineering capabilities. Lotus specializes in engines, new composite materials and design technologies.

GM has been Lotus' largest customer for engineering services for the past four to five years, although other makes also contract with Lotus for engineering. Lotus has 28 projects going for 18 customers, including Chrysler Corp., Austin Rover, Peugeot, Rolls-Royce and Toyota.

GM said Lotus will continue to operate as an independent entity with its own product identity and philosophy. It will continue to provide worldwide engineering consulting services "with contin-

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At a Glance

PRICE: 58 percent for $20 million; 100 percent for $32 million

NOTED FOR: Engineering, engines, new composite materials and design, performance car manufacturing, racing.

1984 SALES: $15.5 million

1984 PROFITS: $579,768

GM follows Ford pattern in Europe

By Richard Feast
European Editor

LONDON.—General Motors last week turned its attention to Europe. It established a pan-European operation to coordinate its car business; it bought a majority stake in Lotus, and it negotiated heavily to buy BL's commercial vehicle division.

GM's new European auto operation is to be based in Zurich—neutral territory—and headed by Ferdinand P. Beickler, who has been chairman and managing director of Adam Opel in West Germany.

Ferdinand P. Beickler

The organization, which becomes operational Feb. 1, will be officially known as General Motors Europe—Passenger Cars.

Lotus is not part of GM Europe. Lotus reports directly to Detroit.

GM thus follows Ford Motor Co., which organized a syncronized European supervisory structure 17 years ago. The main difference is that Ford of Europe embraces trucks and tractors as well as passenger cars.

None of the changes affects the corporation's commercial vehicle operations in Europe, the Bedford manufacturing and sales organization in the U.K. or the Covesco company (jointly owned with Isuzu) in West Germany.

However, GM is known to be involved in takeover talks with BL concerning its commercial vehicle division. GM's similar discussions with MAN in West Germany and Enasa in Spain came to naught, but it is understood that the GM-Leyland Vehicles link has made positive progress. An announce-

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No decision soon on quotas

TOKYO.—It is too early for Japan to decide whether it should continue its restraints on car exports to the U.S. when they expire at the end of March, said Michio Watanabe, head of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

Watanabe made the statement to the Japanese Cabinet following his return from a three-day meeting with trade ministers of the U.S., Canada and the European Community (EC) in San Diego.

A political decision will be made at the 11th hour by the government and the ruling Liberal-Democrat Party after studying the yen's exchange rate, price hikes by the Japanese auto companies and moves by the U.S. Congress, he said.

Watanabe cautioned that the U.S. and the EC are taking sterner attitudes than anticipated toward their trade deficits with Japan.

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Bill Bisaha

Mid-engined Quicksilver by Zimmer

Zimmer Motor Cars, Florida-based builder of expensive 1920s-looking autos, will do an about-face with the modern-looking Quicksilver, a mid-engined sports-luxury car based on General Motors mechanicals. Price is rumored to be in the mid-$40,000s. Formal announcement is expected at the NADA convention.

Late News

Rolls ups sales, prices

LYNDHURST, N.J.—U.S. sales of Rolls-Royce Motors, Inc., rose 2.5 percent last year to 1,110 from 1,083, making the U.S. the company's largest market for the second consecutive year. The firm said it expects a similar increase for 1986. It said orders are strong and waiting times for its automobiles stretch up to 12 months and to 18 months in the case of the new $198,000 Silver Spur Limousine. The company also announced an average increase of 4 percent for its 1986 models.

Right-to-Workers claim NLRB favor on Saturn

By Geoff Sundstrom
Washington Reporter

WASHINGTON.—After meeting with the General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board, a National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundatation attorney said he would be "shocked if we lost any aspect of the case" the group has filed to stop the Saturn labor agreement between the UAW and General Motors.

At a press conference immediately after their meeting last week with NLRB General Counsel Rosemary Collyer, officials of the Right to Work foundation said they were "encouraged and convinced the NLRB considered the case a very important matter" and that it would recieve "careful consideration".

The group wants the General Counsel to issue a formal complaint against GM and the UAW and the Saturn labor pact they announced last February.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation contends the agreement violates federal labor law and a Tennessee right-to-work statute prohibiting pre-hire agreements.

The foundatation claims the deal unlawfully restricts workers' rights in determining workplace representation.

GM would say only that it believes it inappropriate to comment on a matter pending before the NLRB. A UAW spokesman said the union had "no comment at this time."

Rossie Alston, formerly a NLRB staffer and now staff attorney for the right-to-work group, said GM and the UAW have refused to release copies of the labor pact. He said enough details of the agreement have been made public to support his group's case, but the refusal by GM and the UAW to supply the document "indicates both parties know they have a problem."

Labor agreements are not normally made public until ratified by union members, industry sources say.

If the NLRB General Counsel decides to issue a formal complaint, the matter will be refered back to its Detroit office to be brought before an administrative law judge there.

If the decision is to not file a complaint, the case will "stop dead in its tracks," the Right-to-Work group's president, Reed Larson, said.

Larson also said GM is now seeking a conference with the NLRB and that he believes Collyer or her staff will seek a meeting with the UAW on the case.

Alston said he believed the NLRB's Collyer wwill reach a decision on the complaint within a month to six weeks. He said that if a complaint is filed, the Detroit NLRB office normally would have about 60 days to assign the matter to an administrative law judge.

Alston said his group's meeting with Collyer was used to discuss a number of technical matters related to the case such as the statute of limitations and possible defenses that could be used to protect the agreement.

He said no decision had been made whether to appeal the General Counsel's decision if it goes against the right-to-work foundation's position.

In a statement read at the press conference, Larson said, "Rosemary Collyer holds in the palm of her hand the future of labor-management relations affecting the lives of millions of American workers and the entire global economy."

He continued, "If this coercive agreement is allowed to stand, it will mean the end of millions of jobs in the U.S. automobile industry. Al Warren, GM vice president for industrial relations, made it crystal clear.

"Warren said, and I quote, 'I don't think we as a corporation can afford to have nonunion automobile plants in the U.S. any more than the union can. We cannot compete with a nonunion company building automobiles at the prices I think they could do it at in this country.'"

Larson added, "UAW officials have said the Saturn deal gives them 'a license to go after Nissan.'

"If GM and UAW officials succeed in imposing monopoly unionism throughout the auto industry in America, automobile manufacturers will have no choice but to go overseas—to Taiwan, Korea, Mexco, Japan," Larson said.

GM to pay for repairs on engines

WASHINGTON.—General Motors has admitted possible engine-block cracking in some 2.5-liter 4-cylinder engines in 1984 cars and has told the government it will pay for necessary repairs and warrant the engines for 5 years or 100,000 miles.

The Center for Auto Safety estimated that 400,000 engines might be involved. It estimated that with only a 10 percent failure rate, the repairs would cost GM $100 million.

If cracks occur in the cylinder block casting between the valve lifter cavity and water jacket, engine coolant will be lost and the engine will fail.

CAS figures labor at 10½ hours and cost at well over $2,000 per car. GM figures labor at slightly under 9 hours but uses an add-labor section for certain problems.

This "special policy"—issued by GM to dealers, filed with NHTSA and reported by CAS—deals with the charges made by the safety center last February. At that time, GM accused CAS of exaggeration and indicated that any problem that occurred would be handled under the 24-month/24,000-mile powertrain warranty. At that time, most of the cars involved were still under that warranty.

The center has asked GM Chairman Roger Smith to inform all owners of their eligibility for free repairs, if needed.

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A speed endurance run was featured during dedication ceremonies

St. Louis to get Chrysler minivan

By Mary Connelly
Detroit Reporter

WITTMAN, Ariz.—Chrysler Corp. will boost minivan production to more than 300,000 units a year when a second plant in St. Louis comes on line early in 1987.

Chrysler Motors President Harold K. Sperlich said no decision has been made on where the large, rear-wheel-drive models currently assembled at St. Louis Plant II will be transferred.

St. Louis 2 assembles the Chrysler Fifth Avenue, Dodge Diplomat and Plymouth Gran Fury as well as the Caravelle Salon, sold only in Canada.

Speaking at the dedication of Chrysler's new $12 million proving grounds here, Sperlich said the startup at St. Louis 2 will be slow with a second shift added based on market demand.

"We'll have enough capacity to really go at the market," Sperlich said. "We don't know how high is up. We do feel strongly that up is higher than one plant's worth, and that is why we're moving ahead."

Currently, the minivans are produced only in Windsor, Ont., and the company has been saying for some time it may open an additional source. Chrysler produced 274,000 minivans in the 1985 model year.

In the summer of 1984, Chrysler announced that the St. Louis plant would undergo a $250-million renovation for 1986-model-year production. That decision was reversed due to sales volumes of the Fifth Avenue.

Sperlich also said the fate of the Jefferson Avenue assembly plant in Detroit remains unknown although discussions continue with city, state and UAW officials. The plant has no scheduled product after the 1987 model year.

"We have no idea at this time what the answer is going to be," Sperlich said. "At the moment the facility has no future."

Sperlich reiterated that Chrysler is currently seeking streamlined labor agreements with fewer job classifications and simplified work rules at its plants, including Jefferson.

Noting that the drive for more innovative labor agreements is part of the company's effort to improve product quality and cut costs, Sperlich said there has been "tremendous support from the leadership of the UAW."

He also said it is unclear how the inexpensive, mini-compact market will "shake out" in the U.S. because of the competition with "good-quality" used cars.

"It's an unknown how big that market will be in this country," he said. "It's a huge market in other countries where there isn't the used-car population."

He predicted that of the 26 auto companies currently selling in the U.S. market today, "marginal producers" will eventually "fall out" because sales volumes will not sustain effective dealer, marketing and service organizations.

"You'll come down to the dozen or so significant automobile companies in the world," he said. "The big dozen will dominate."

Chrysler marked the dedication of its 3,812-acre Arizona Proving Grounds with a NASCAR-certified, 24-hour speed and endurance run.

Four 1986 models—two Dodge Daytona Turbo Zs and two Chrysler Lasers—set speed and endurance records running for 24 hours at average speeds of more than 126 MPH.

A Daytona Turbo Z averaged 126.967 MPH for 24 hours and covered 3,048.78 miles on the new proving grounds' 4.2-mile high-speed oval. Its best lap speed was 131.526 MPH.

The average speed for the other cars were: Laser Number 1, 125.896 MPH; Laser Number 2, 126.301 MPH, and the other Daytona, 126.679 MPH.

The four cars were attempting to surpass records set in 1956 when Chrysler dedicated its first proving grounds at Chelsea, Mich.

"The object of the inaugural run," said John D. Withrow, Chrysler's executive vice president for product development, "is to show that our modern fuel-efficient 2.2-liter turbocharged engine can not only keep up with the world-famous Chrysler hemis of the past, but do better."

The new proving grounds, completed in October, are used to test braking performance, vehicle noise, fuel handling, carburetion, ride, handling, vehicle durability and reliability.

Subaru slates own program on lease cars

PENNSAUKEN, N.J.—Subaru will launch a pilot leasing program in New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey Feb. 24 and, if things go according to plan, it will be expanded to cover the entire nation within one year.

Subaru Leasing Corp., a subsidiary of Subaru Financial Services, which is in turn a subsidiary of Subaru of America, will capitalize and supervise the program. It is negotiating with two firms to service the plan.

Closed-end leases with purchase options and an early termination provision will be offered.

Where state laws permit, lessors will be able to amortize the cost of one of Subaru's nine service contracts across the life of the contract.

Consumer leases are the fastest growing segment of the leasing market, and one that Subaru feels it can easily step into, said Larry Wright, leasing manager of the leasing and financial subsidiaries.

NHTSA proposes truck MPG levels for 1988, 1989

WASHINGTON.—NHTSA has proposed a range of numbers for 1988 and 1989 light-truck CAFE standards.

Its proposal for 1988 calls for combined mileage ratings for four-wheel-drive and two-wheel-drive trucks that would be at some point between 20.5 MPG and 22.0 MPG. For 1989, the proposal calls for a combined truck CAFE number between 20.5 MPG and 22.5 MPG.

Truck makers would be allowed either to average their fuel-economy figures for both 4x4s and 4x2s together to meet the "combined" figure, or to meet separate standards for their 4x4 fleets and their 4x2 fleets.

For the 1988 model year, the separate standard for 4x2s is proposed as being somewhere between 21.0 MPG and 22.5 MPG. For 4x4s, the proposal would put the fuel-economy number between 19.5 MPG and 21.0 MPG.

For the 1989 model year, the proposed range is from 21.0 MPG to 23.0 MPG for the 4x2 fleet and from 19.5 to 21.5 MPG for 4x4s.

Tying the knot

PACCAR will begin marketing this Volkswagen do Brasil Class 7 truck next fall. Although built in Brazil, it is being spec'ed by PACCAR for the North American market with premium U.S.-designed powertrain components.

truck industry news

11-month registrations set record, with all segments up

By Joseph Bohn
Truck Editor

Truck registrations soared to a record high for 11 months, topping the 1984 pace—the previous record—by 15.4 percent.

There were increases in all three segments, though the light segment, as usual, led the upturn.

Medium-duties showed the next strongest gain, followed by heavies with the smallest increase.

Although the mediums and heavies maintained some strength, industry forecasters continue to predict downturns for them in 1986.

The most recent forecast by Rockwell International calls for a drop of 10 to 15 percent in North American medium/heavy deliveries in 1986.

Rockwell President Donald R. Ball, in his forecast to New York financial analysts, didn't foresee any return to the disastrous levels of 1982-1983.

Overall, truck manufacturers registered 4,253,532 units for January-November, up 15.4 percent from 3,686,240 in like 1984.

Light-duty registrations of 3,999,298 were up 15.8 percent from 3,454,729 the previous year.

Within the light segment, Class 1 registrations of 2,756,800 were up from 1,983,239 in 1984. Class 2 registrations of 1,208,663 were off from 1,438,067, and Class 3 registrations of 33,835 were up slightly from 33,423.

Medium-duty deliveries totaled 59,553, up 11.6 percent from 53,372 in the 1984 period. Within the medium segment, Class 4 deliveries of 809 were up from 644. Class 5 deliveries of 5,836 were up from 3,870. And Class 6 deliveries of 52,908 were up from 48,858.

The heavy segment's deliveries of 194,681 were 9.3 percent ahead of 178,139 for the 1984 period.

Within the heavy group, Class 7 deliveries of 70,931 were up from 60,703, while Class 8 deliveries of 123,750 were up from 117,436 in 1984.

Among the heavies, Navistar, which continues to use the International name on its trucks, improved its lead over Ford by a small margin.

International had 21.80 percent of the market after 10 months and 21.87 percent after 11 months.

Ford had 21.04 percent of the heavy market after 10 months and 20.99 percent after 11 months.

Mack's market share fell from 11.91 percent after 10 months to 11.75 percent after 11.

GMC was up a hair, and Freightliner was off fractionally from October to November.

Among the heavies, Ford continues to show the best 11-month gain over 1984, with a market share up 1.82 percentage points, followed by White whose 11-month share was up 0.63 percentage points and Mack whose share was up 0.51 percentage points.

Mercedes-Benz showed a 0.43 percentage-point year-to-year improvement.

Kenworth and Peterbilt had the biggest losses in share. Kenworth's share was off 1.52 percentage points, while GMC's was off 1.11 percentage points from a year-earlier.

International's year-to-year share was off 0.93 percentage points, and Peterbilt's was off 0.87 percentage points.

Other heavy-duty truck makers showed fractional gains over 1984.

Firms improve engine, truck coverage

Cat, Isuzu expand warranties

Caterpillar Tractor and Isuzu Truck of America have expanded their warranties, a general trend among manufacturers these days because of the increased competition in the marketplace.

Caterpillar, of Peoria, Ill., expanded its Extended Service Coverage program to allow more flexible coverage for owners of Cat-powered trucks delivered on or after Jan. 1, 1986.

North American truckers can select the type and length of plan for Cat 3208, 3306B or 3406B engines that best suits their needs.

The new program expands current options and complements Caterpillar half-million-mile Major Component Protection and Full Service Coverage plans.

The Extended Service Coverage for 3208 truck engines is available in 50,000-mile/12-month increments up to 150,000 miles or 60 months.

For the 3306B or 3406B, coverage is available in 50,000-mile/12-month increments up to 300,000 miles or 60 months.

Optional 3306B or 3406B Major Component Coverage extends parts protection on 12 major components up to 500,000 miles or 60 months, whichever comes first.

Major Component Protection is not available on the 3208 truck engines.

Owners of Caterpillar-powered trucks or buses can buy coverage in the above-described increments anytime during the standard warranty period.

Mandatory dealer service stops during the chosen coverage period or is not required.

There are no penalties or coverage reduction proration clauses based on mileage.

Extended Service Coverage can be transferred to the next owner during the coverage period.

Enrollment in the 3306B/3406B Extended Service Coverage program includes one free performance analysis report test. It may be made anytime during the origi-

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Alexander promoted in Fruehauf shakeup

DETROIT.—Leon Alexander has been named executive vice-president-Trailer Operations and president of Fruehauf Division, replacing George F. Malley who resigned.

Joseph Silk, vice president of operations—Fruehauf Division, also resigned, with no successor named.

Although there were no specific reasons for the shakeup, some major truck firms reported scaling back their Fruehauf orders because of quality problems or high prices. Alexander is a 36-year management veteran with Fruehauf's liquid and bulk division. Most recently, he was its vice president and general manager.

Industry working hard to improve its record, MVMA executive says

Study documents big-truck deaths

Nearly 4,500 people die each year in crashes with tractor-trailer rigs, but the industry is working hard to reduce that number, according to an MVMA vice president.

All too often, the big trucks barrel down the highways with inadequate brakes, bald tires and drivers who are tired and/or not necessarily qualified, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's report, Big Trucks, charged.

The report said that:

1. In a fatal crash involving a big truck and a passenger car, the car occupant is 35 times more likely to be killed than the trucker.

2. Trucks take a much greater distance to stop than cars. From 55 MPH, most cars stop in 140 to 150 feet. But a loaded rig typically takes 250 to 300 feet to stop. An empty rig takes 300 to 400 feet. And a bobtail can take 500 feet.

3. Many big trucks don't have front brakes. They are required on new rigs, but regulations allow them to be removed from three-axle tractors. They also are often disconnected on two-axle tractors.

4. Nineteen states do not issue classified licenses to handle big trucks. Drivers can go out with general commercial licenses and try to handle 18-wheelers.

5. Truck safety inspections (still relatively rare) turn up these kinds of violations: Only 5 percent of trucks and drivers inspected in Colorado in 1985 were in compliance with all regulations. Two-thirds of the 10,000 trucks recently inspected in Missouri were ordered out of service. Even in states like Washington, where all trucks carrying hazardous cargo are required to be inspected, half of the trucks and drivers have been found to be in violation of truck safety rules, the insurance institute reported.

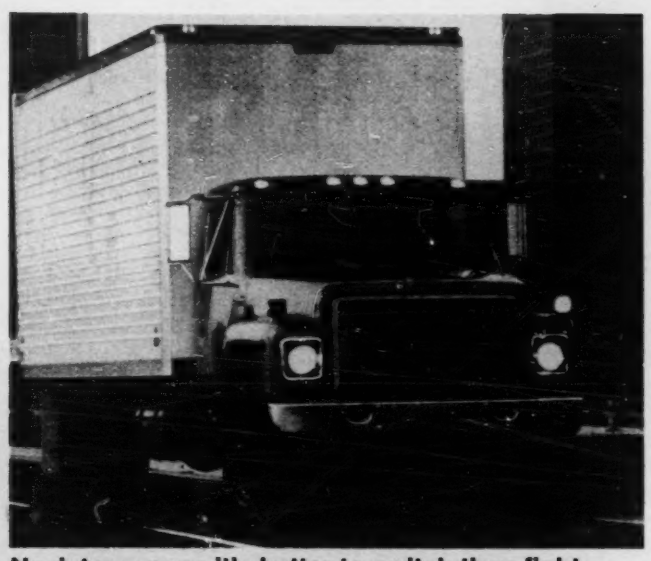
Peter Griskivich, MVMA vice president, also pointed out that a growing fear of big trucks is the Number One problem in the trucking industry, but much was being done to improve it.

Public fear, he added, is at the root of the industry's image problem and poses a real threat to its ability to introduce more productive equipment or get the productivity gains promised truckers by the 1982 highway bill.

The industry has taken positive steps, some in cooperation with government, to make highways safer, Griskivich pointed out.

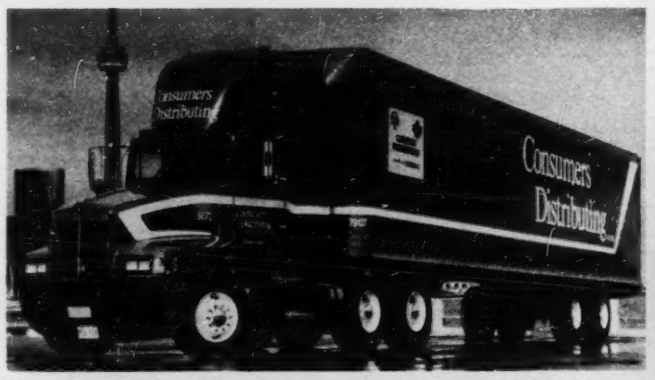
Along with past studies, the Department of Transportation is financing an analysis of mileage traveled by heavy trucks. It will provide, for the first time, accurate information on heavy-truck accident rates by kind of vehicle and road, time of day, cargo carried, etc.

Please turn to Page 13, Col. 1



Navistar proves it's better to switch than fight

Operators of medium-duty trucks and school buses who switched to Navistar International's 6.9-liter diesel V-8 averaged 60 percent better fuel economy than with similar-sized V-8 gasoline engines in 2½-year, 50-vehicle, 2.5-million-mile customer tests. Navistar furnished the oil and all filters for test-drivers and agreed to trade back gas engines for diesels for those who wanted to switch.



Kenworth wins Canadian economy contest

A Kenworth T600A, operated by Eastern Rentals, Ltd., Kingston, Ont., won Canada's "Trucksave" contest, taking first and second places in the 75,000-to-86,000-pound Gross Combined Weight category. Its best average was was 12.09 MPG at a GVW of 84,413 pounds. Another T600A, shown above, won third place, giving Kenworth a clean sweep.

Industry working hard to improve its record, MVMA executive says

Study documents big-truck deaths

Continued from Page 12

The industry recognizes the driver's crucial role in truck accidents, and that is why it created the Professional Truck Driver Institute of America, the MVMA executive added.

The institute is a historic first step in getting bad drivers off the road.

It will accredit truck-driver training programs by establishing uniform, nationwide standards for judging curricula, facilities and quality of instructors. Accreditation will be voluntary.

Certification of truck drivers as professionals is the long-range objective of the Institute since the immediate need is to address the turnover of drivers, estimated to be well over 50 percent in the next decade.

Allaying public fears about sharing the road with larger, more productive trucks led a coalition of industry organizations, labor and government to finance a pair of films on the dynamic behavior of tractor-trailer combinations.

Another safety initiative is the Image and Safety program of the American Trucking Assns. It is directed at the driver, fleet management and legislators.

It includes driver training, better safety information for carriers, support for increased roadside inspections of trucks, the expansion of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance to all states and a more effective National Driver Register than presently exists.

ATA's program reflects the industry's recognition that safety and image are really the same thing, Griskivich said.

He noted that Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole has made truck safety her top priority in 1986 and has called on the industry to work with the government on:

1. Increasing the number of roadside truck inspections in states.
2. Requiring a single, classified license for drivers.
3. Strengthening the National Driver Register and extending it to all 50 states within the next three to five years.
4. Reducing the incidence of hazardous-materials accidents.
5. Launching an inspection program for the nation's bus fleet.

U.S. TRUCK REGISTRATIONS

ELEVEN MONTHS, 1985 VS. 1984★

Make	11 mos., 1985	Percent Share of '85 market	11 mos., 1984	Percent Share of '84 market	Pct. pt. Change, '85-'84
Chevrolet	1,146,069	26.95	996,931	27.04	−0.09
Ford	1,129,795	26.56	1,060,437	28.77	−2.21
Dodge	458,742	10.78	385,596	10.46	+0.32
GMC	318,389	7.49	278,722	7.56	−0.07
Jeep	157,661	3.71	133,172	3.61	−0.10
Plymouth	94,676	2.23	72,078	1.96	+0.27
International	66,238	1.56	61,052	1.66	−0.10
Mack	26,272	0.62	23,173	0.63	−0.01
Freightliner	16,434	0.39	14,671	0.40	−0.01
Peterbilt	11,057	0.26	11,676	0.32	−0.06
Kenworth	10,493	0.25	12,313	0.33	−0.08
White	7,802	0.18	6,020	90.16	+0.02
Mercedes	4,011	0.09	2,251	0.06	+0.03
Volvo	2,154	0.05	1,732	0.05	——
Autocar	1,555	0.03	1,170	0.03	——
Western Star	1,039	0.02	616	0.02	——
Miscellaneous☆	801,145	18.83	624,630	16.94	+1.89
TOTALS	4,253,532	100.00	3,686,240	100.00	——

★—All truck registrations in Oklahoma, and in 1984, New York, compiled from manufacturers' sales records.
☆—Miscellaneous includes imports, Crane Carrier, Oshkosh, FWD, Hendrickson, etc.

U.S. HEAVY-DUTY REGISTRATIONS

ELEVEN MONTHS, 1985 VS. 1984★

Make	11 mos., 1985	Percent Share of '85 market	11 mos., 1984	Percent Share of '84 market	Pct. pt. Change, '85-'84
International	42,573	21.87	40,621	22.80	−0.93
Ford	40,859	20.99	34,147	19.17	+1.82
GMC	23,630	12.14	23,598	13.25	−1.11
Mack	22,881	11.75	20,030	11.24	+0.51
Freightliner	16,434	8.44	14,671	8.24	+0.20
Peterbilt	11,057	5.68	11,676	6.55	−0.87
Kenworth	10,493	5.39	12,313	6.91	−1.52
Chevrolet	10,290	5.29	9,389	5.27	+0.02
White	7,802	4.01	6,020	3.38	+0.63
Volvo	2,154	1.11	1,732	0.97	+0.14
Mercedes-Benz	1,774	0.91	849	0.48	+0.43
Autocar	1,555	0.80	1,170	0.66	+0.14
Western Star	1,039	0.53	616	0.35	+0.18
Miscellaneous	2,140	1.09	1,307	0.73	+0.36
TOTALS	194,681	100.00	178,139	100.00	——

★—Group 7 and 8 trucks only.

Cat, Isuzu boost warranties on truck engines

Continued from Page 12

nal warranty or selected coverage period.

The in-chassis engine evaluation is conducted under full-load test conditions. The test produces a comparison that will tell if an engine fails to conform to original specifications and will identify most necessary repairs. Repairs can be made under the terms and conditions of the extended service coverage program.

Isuzu Truck, South El Monte, Calif., has adopted a new vehicle warranty policy that greatly expands coverage of the Isuzu NPR Class 3 truck.

The expanded warranty, which retroactively covers all NPR trucks sold in the U.S. since their introduction last spring, expands coverage of the entire vehicle (except tires).

It also provides protection from perforation caused by corrosion.

Previously, the entire vehicle (except tires) had 12-month, 24,000-mile protection. Now, there is no mileage limitation.

The engine and crossmembers in the powertrain also get 24-months, unlimited mileage coverage which includes 100 percent of the cost of parts and labor on the engine and 50 percent of the cost on crossmembers.

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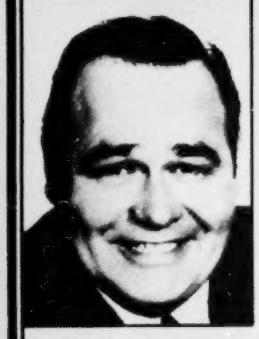

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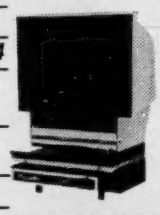

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Rock Bottom Prices.

Detroit dealer faces trial on energy charges

DETROIT.—Auto dealer Robert Mechigian, of Bob Saks Oldsmobile in Farmington Hills, Mich., must stand trial on charges that he incited other auto dealers to have their utility meters altered illegally, a judge ruled.

Mechigian, free on personal bond pending the trial, could be sentenced to up to five years in jail if convicted of solicitation of energy fraud and four years if convicted of energy fraud.

Both charges are felonies, and he could face the loss of his franchise if convicted. General Motors' franchise agreements force a dealer convicted of a felony to give up the franchise.

Mechigian, according to court testimony, referred a local contractor to three Detroit-area auto dealerships, saying the contractor could reduce their power consumption by altering their electric meters. The contractor, who is on probation for other utility tamperings, testified that Mechigian introduced him to at least a dozen auto dealers.

Marvin Tamaroff, of Tamaroff Buick, and Robert Vermeulen, owner of Page Toyota, both in Southfield, Mich., testified they paid the contractor to alter meters at their dealerships.

Tamaroff repaid more than $14,000 to the utilities, and Vermeulen pleaded guilty last year to energy fraud.

Mazda Central begins work on new HQ building

IRVINE, Calif.—Mazda Motors of America (Central), Inc., has broken ground for its new $15-million corporate headquarters building.

Toru Ogawa, president, called the site dedication an important step in Mazda's growth in the U.S.

"The announcement of this exciting new facility is further evidence of our long-term commitment to the U.S. and its economic growth," Ogawa said.

The new headquarters will be built on an eight-acre site in the Irvine Spectrum business and industrial complex. Construction of the five-story, 118,712-square-foot building is expected to be completed in early 1987. The new facility will house an estimated 250 Mazda Motors employes.

Mazda Central is the importer of Mazda cars and trucks sold in 31 Western and Midwest states through four distributors and more than 500 dealers. It is currently headquartered in Rancho Dominguez, Calif. The company joins two other Mazda organizations, Mazda (North America), Inc., and Mazda Distributors Pacific, in establishing headquarters in Irvine.

GM's CAFE-rescue plan is approved by NHTSA

WASHINGTON.—NHTSA has approved General Motors' plan to generate enough CAFE credits in the 1986 model year to wipe out its 1984 shortfall, which made GM liable for $46,315,695 in fines.

GM's plan—apparently helped by its current 7.9-percent financing on cars with 4-cylinder engines, but not mentioned by NHTSA in its letter to GM—is to reach 26.3 MPG for 1986 models. If achieved, that would result in 14,820,000 credits ($74.1 million) which would more than offset the 1984-model-year shortfall.

IMPORT SALES BY MODEL

	Dec. 1985	Dec. 1984	12 Mos., 1985	12 Mos., 1984
ALFA ROMEO	182	302	4,502	3,702
AUDI	6,343	5,780	74,061	71,237
4000	0	0	0	10,430
4000S	1,219	1,165	17,352	4,890
4000CS Quattro	579	322	4,951	3,983
5000S	3,396	3,255	39,742	41,651
5000CS Turbo	647	758	7,735	6,667
5000CS Turbo Quattro	225	4	751	65
Coupe	277	276	3,633	3,520
BMW	7,692	8,135	87,873	70,897
318	450	2,396	23,111	28,675
325/e/es	4,159	2,678	30,819	15,773
524 TD	226	0	1,831	0
528/535i	1,855	1,867	17,749	15,395
635CSI	355	298	4,423	2,695
735i	647	896	9,937	8,359
CHEVROLET	9,423	2,635	84,860	7,463
Spectrum	4,549	1,365	53,593	2,077
Sprint	4,874	1,270	31,267	10,927
CHRYSLER/MITSUBISHI	13,506	8,212	105,293	91,718
Colt	10,298	6,452	76,313	69,379
Conquest	507	397	5,387	7,069
Vista	2,701	1,363	23,593	15,270
FIAT	0	0	0	316
HONDA	40,866	26,836	406,413	374,819
Civic	16,880	11,970	155,170	137,405
Civic CRX	5,796	4,680	52,861	47,445
Accord	12,735	5,940	121,994	123,045
Prelude	5,455	4,246	75,938	66,924
I.A.I.	0	0	0	1,466
ISUZU	1,918	1,192	26,953	17,233
I-Mark	1,264	323	12,780	4,427
Impulse	654	869	14,173	12,806
JAGUAR	3,114	2,139	20,528	18,044
XJ6	2,490	1,689	16,744	14,564
XJS	624	450	3,784	3,480
LANCIA	0	0	0	21
MASERATI BITURBO	63	90	1,190	2,023
MAZDA	25,468	13,462	211,093	169,666
323/GLC	9,181	3,251	64,444	45,221
626	10,878	6,314	92,839	71,407
RX-7	5,409	3,897	53,810	53,038
MERCEDES BENZ	10,119	9,086	86,903	78,522
190D	189	475	3,067	5,309
190E	1,877	2,627	22,325	17,704
190E-16	182	0	628	0
240D	0	1	0	26
300D	3,471	1,887	18,596	16,659
300CD	37	154	1,556	1,539
300TD	94	263	3,112	2,465
300SD	104	901	6,746	12,189
380SE/420SEL	1,827	964	10,885	7,135
500/560SEL	692	635	7,842	4,557
380/560SL	1,343	1,034	10,508	9,288
500/560SEC	303	146	1,638	1,651
MERCURY MERKUR	888	0	8,974	0
MITSUBISHI	3,601	2,952	49,734	39,104
Starion	402	409	4,841	6,375
Cordia	416	615	8,159	13,194
Tredia	803	907	10,902	13,724
Mirage	910	533	13,066	3,101
Galant	1,070	488	12,766	2,710
NISSAN	39,270	37,820	535,372	485,298
Sentra/210	9,601	13,405	179,235	189,480
Pulsar/310	3,668	2,947	49,816	37,287
Stanza	5,373	3,591	64,398	44,613
Maxima	8,751	6,299	99,051	68,209
200SX	4,414	4,731	65,792	63,465
300ZX	5,159	4,935	67,409	73,097
Hawaii	2,304	1,912	9,671	9,147
PEUGEOT	970	1,995	15,636	20,007
PORSCHE	2,484	1,797	25,173	19,611
944	1,618	1,277	16,705	13,036
911	638	416	5,882	4,472
928	228	104	2,586	2,103
RENAULT	395	877	7,205	12,243
18i	112	197	2,411	2,971
Fuego	283	680	4,794	9,272
SAAB	3,445	2,999	39,068	33,631
900	1,011	818	11,353	8,369
900S	1,144	949	11,836	9,993
900 Turbo	658	1,214	14,259	14,408
9000 Turbo	599	0	795	0
Tourist	33	18	825	861
SUBARU	16,246	12,762	178,175	157,385
TOYOTA	53,745	47,065	620,047	557,981
Starlet	0	0	0	259
Corolla	13,215	12,397	168,378	157,876
Tercel	5,342	8,254	88,841	103,013
Celica	10,120	6,467	80,480	85,213
Supra	1,180	2,509	23,569	29,871
Camry	12,368	7,974	128,132	93,725
Cressida	3,298	3,975	45,290	34,456
Land Cruiser	770	354	4,740	4,037
Van	1,934	2,648	32,631	33,626
4Runner SR 5	527	745	5,495	6,498
MR2	2,751	0	32,309	0
Hawaii	2,240	1,742	10,179	9,404
Other	0	0	3	3
VOLKSWAGEN	10,275	8,783	140,505	103,402
Rabbit Convertible	915	625	12,644	11,552
Jetta	7,280	4,855	83,783	37,975
Vanagon	624	1,147	16,803	17,985
Quantum	857	1,246	13,948	18,645
Scirocco	599	910	13,552	17,245
VOLVO	4,321	4,194	104,267	99,454
DL	1,863	1,607	39,169	44,339
GL	346	658	9,578	24,271
GLT Turbo	10	405	2,166	9,866
Diesel	0	256	1,938	5,589
740 Series — Gas	1,368	666	32,141	1,406
740 Series — Diesel	130	0	5,023	0
760 Series — Gas	413	355	10,186	8,872
760 Series — Diesel	12	108	2,104	3,485
Tourist	179	139	1,962	1,626
YUGO	1,698	0	3,895	0
IMPORT TOTAL	256,032	199,113	2,838,116	2,441,651

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Jan. 29—Columbus Fair Auto Auction, Obetz, Ohio, and Kansas City Auto Auction, Kansas City.

Jan. 30—Fredricksburg Auto Auction, Fredricksburg, Va.; Bel Air Auto Auction, Bel Air, Md.; Evansville Auto Auction, Evansville, Ind., and Northway Exchange, Inc., Clifton Park, N.Y.

Chrysler Corp.

Jan. 28—Hatfield Auto Auction, Hatfield, Pa., and NuCarPrep System, Santa Fe Springs, Calif.

Jan. 29—Southern Auto Auction, Warehouse Point, Conn.; Columbus Auto Auction, Obetz, Ohio; Dallas Auto Auction, Grand Prairie, Tex., and South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.

Jan. 30—Fredricksburg Auto Auction, Fredricksburg, Va.

Jan. 31—St. Louis Auto Auction, Inc., Bridgeton, Mo.

Ford Motor Co.

Jan. 28—South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.

Jan. 29—Columbus Fair Auto Auction, Obetz, Ohio, and Clanton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.

Jan. 30—Baltimore Washington Auto Exchange, Baltimore; Arena Auto Auction, Chicago, and Big H Auto Auction, Houston.

General Motors

Jan. 29—Golden Gate Auto Auction, Fremont, Calif.; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.

Jan. 30—Arena Auto Auction, Chicago, and Ohio Auto Auction, Grove City, Ohio.

Used Car Sales
Auction Averages

Jan. to date	$4,833
Month ago	$4,559
Year ago	$4,992

Model Breakdown
Auction Averages

	JAN., 1986	DEC., 1985	NOV., 1985
1986	$8,769		
1985	$8,576	$9,839	$9,989
1984	$6,172	$6,514	$6,690
1983	$5,352	$5,594	$5,820
1982	$4,294	$4,507	$4,752
1981	$3,266	$3,474	$3,543
1980	$2,476	$2,694	$2,738
1979	$1,986	$2,207	$2,254
Overall Average	$4,833	$4,559	$4,714

China taxes cars owned by foreign firms

BEIJING, China.—As if things weren't tough enough, foreign firms doing business in China—already chafing from foreign exchange and housing problems—were dealt another blow: A tax on cars retroactive to last May.

The Peking Highway Tax Collection Center delivered its New Year greeting by announcing that the new tax of $12.50 a month per car applies to all foreign companies. Diplomats, however, are exempt from the tax.

A tax official said the Ministry of Communications decided to impose the tax last year, but failed to notify the foreign companies.

The tax notice is said to coincide with government demands that embassies and news organizations sign new contracts for the employment of Chinese staffs, with pay hikes of about 50 percent. Businesses faced similar pay increases last year for their staffs.

It is estimated that 1,000 firms from more than 30 countries have opened offices in Beijing since 1979.

Fredlund's 50th

Fredlund Bros., Inc. (Chrysler-Plymouth-Dodge), Cambridge, Minn., receives a 50-year-dealer award from Chrysler Corp. From left are Douglas Fredlund, Jerry Fredlund and Don Fredlund, dealership owners, and Stanford Woods, assistant manager of Chrysler's Minneapolis zone.

Nationwide hikes discounts on passive-restraint cars

COLUMBUS, O.—Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. will provide new and increased insurance-premium discounts to policyholders whose cars have air bags and/or automatic seat belts.

The discounts apply to all 1986 Mercedes-Benz models and some 1986 Volvo, BMW and Toyota Cressida models.

The discounts will apply to "first-party" auto coverages and will include medical payments, family compensation and personal injury protection for policyholders whose cars have safety equipment that operates automatically.

Insurance-premium discounts for those coverages will include 40 percent on cars with air bags that protect both the driver and front-seat passengers. That is 10 percentage points higher than current discounts.

The new discounts will be 25 percent on cars with air bags on the driver side only and 10 percent on cars with other automatic safety systems.

President Paul A. Donald said Nationwide's range of auto safety discounts, recognizing different levels of crash protection, is the first of its kind in the insurance industry.

The discount package, introduced by Nationwide in New York State last year, will be filed in all appropriate states with a projected effective date of April 1.

Nationwide's new program expands a 30-percent discount on first-party coverages that the company has provided since 1973 to car owners having air bags protecting all front-seat occupants.

EPA may place metal degreaser on hazard list

WASHINGTON.—The EPA is proposing to list trichloroethylene, a widely use metal degreaser, as a hazardous pollutant.

The decision means the agency will study what risk the chemical poses to public health and how best to control it. It could also result in the EPA proposing standards to limit ambient emission of the pollutant.

Trichloroethylene is considered by the EPA to be a probable human carcinogen. When inhaled, it can also impair the central nervous system, cardiovascular system, the liver and kidneys. The agency estimated that emissions of the substance result in about 4.1 cancer deaths each year across the country. For those who work with the solvent, the risk of getting cancer is about 9.4 in 100,000 when exposed for 70 years, the EPA said.

About 65,000 metric tons of trichloroethylene were produced in 1983 and about 57,000 metric tons of it evaporated in the shops, factories and industrial facilities that use it, EPA said. Ninety percent of 1983's production was used for metal degreasing and the remainder as a secondary solvent in producing adhesives, paint, pesticides and pharmaceuticals, the agency said.

EPA's studies of the chemical are expected to take about two years.

Potamkin brothers lecture on success

PHILADELPHIA.—Robert and Alan Potamkin, brothers who are leading auto dealers, lectured on their successes in the automobile industry before the Wharton Entrepreneurial Club at the Wharton School of Business Administration at the University of Pennsylvania here.

Both are graduates of Wharton. The brothers were characterized by Arthur Bobrow, club president, as two of the university's most successful graduates.

Stock of unsold imported cars highest in 3 years at 338,315

By Kathy Boyer
Detroit Reporter

The stockpile of unsold imported cars in the U.S. was the highest in three years as 1986 opened.

The Jan. 1 inventory count was 338,315 cars, according to Automotive News estimates. Not since the 355,603 in stock on Feb. 1, 1983, had the total been so high.

The figures may surprise some import-car dealers, who generally have been complaining of inventory shortages. They were, perhaps, reflecting the market trend.

For despite the upward bulge in actual numbers, the selling supply was skinned back to 28 days as opposed to the figure of 49 days represented by that peak inventory of 35 months ago.

The comparative size of the Jan. 1 inventory can best be measured against the fact that stocks have reached 300,000 only four times since February, 1983.

The import-car stock of 338,315, compares with the month-earlier total of 304,079, and a year-earlier figure of 259,933. The latest days-supply figure for cars, 28, compared with 31 days a month earlier and 32 a year earlier.

Import trucks were a bit of a different story. Inventories Jan. 1 dipped slightly to 102,664 from 103,138 a month earlier, which had been the highest in 10 months. On Jan. 1 a year ago, the count had been 114,485.

Truck inventories represented a 38-day supply on Jan. 1, compared with 41 days a month earlier and 45 days a year earlier.

The Jan. 1 combined imported car and truck inventory rose to 440,979—the highest count since Feb. 1, 1983, when 448,308 units were reported. In the 35 months since then, the combined stockpile has topped 400,000 only two other times.

The combined Jan. 1 inventory represented a 30-day supply, compared with 33 days a month earlier and 36 days a year earlier.

Several makes ran counter to the downward trend. Although Volvo's daily selling rate stayed nearly the same, it had much more stock than it had the previous month. A spokesperson said, "This was a kind of planned buildup to accommodate sales for January and February, which are anticipated at about 10,000 per month."

Yugo's increase was due to all but 142 vehicles arriving late at its dealerships.

Alfa Romeo's increase was a combination of slower sales and and late shipments. Jaguar reported lower inventories resulting from shipments that did not arrive.

On Jan. 1, import-car inventories were divided this way: Japan, 62.79 percent; Germany, 25.18 percent, and other countries, 12.03 percent.

One month earlier, the shares were: Japan, 63.59 percent; Germany, 26.06 percent and other countries, 10.35 percent.

All inventory figures in this story include dealer and port inventories and everything in transit in between. Days' supplies are figured on the basis of selling days, excluding Sundays and holidays.

These are the import cars by country of origin and their days' supplies (the rule of thumb is that any make with less than a 15-day supply is hard to find in a showroom):

Japan—Honda, 8; Toyota, 11; Mazda, 13; Subaru, 25; Mitsubishi, 31; Nissan, 35; Isuzu, 107, and Chevrolet imports, 138, (including 89 for the Suzuki-built Sprint and 191 for the Isuzu-built Spectrum).

Germany—Mercedes-Benz, 19; Porsche, 56; BMW, 62; Audi, 64, VW, 83, and Merkur, 108.

Other countries—Jaguar, 3; Yugo, 24; Saab, 47; Alfa Romeo, 57; Peugeot, 103, and Renault, 263.

Trucks and their days' supplies: Isuzu, 65; Chrysler, 61, Nissan, 58; Mitsubishi, 54; Toyota, 23, and Mazda, 21.

All import truck figures include Nissan's domestic models.

Calvert elected in Houston

HOUSTON.—Mike Calvert, Mike Calvert Toyota, has been elected chairman of the Houston Automobile Dealers Assn.

IMPORT STOCKS

	Jan. 1, 1986	Dec. 1, 1985	Jan. 1, 1985
Spectrum	191	131	205
Sprint	89	64	38
Chevrolet	138	96	125
Chrysler Corp.	52	67	49
Honda	8	6	18
Isuzu	107	101	74
Mazda	13	18	37
Mitsubishi	31	32	22
Nissan	0	26	36
Subaru	25	17	12
Toyota	11	11	15
JAPAN	19	24	26
Audi	63	62	78
BMW	62	68	59
Mercedes-Benz	19	24	21
Merkur	107	139	0
Porsche	56	52	43
VW	83	71	64
GERMANY	57	59	53
Alfa Romeo	111	62	59
Jaguar	3	16	6
Peugeot	103	90	39
Renault	263	221	194
Saab	47	37	27
Volvo	120	54	80
Yugo	24	14	0
OTHER COUNTRIES	68	51	55
TOTAL IMPORT CARS	28	31	33
Isuzu	65	103	68
Mazda	21	21	33
Mitsubishi	54	32	23
Nissan*	58	55	56
Toyota	23	23	35
Chrysler	61	66	71
TOTAL IMPORT TRUCKS	38	41	45
TOTAL IMPORT VEHICLES	30	33	36

*—Includes domestic trucks.

Monte Carlo LS joins Chevy lineup

The Monte Carlo LS joins the Chevrolet lineup for 1986. The Luxury Sport features a new aerodynamic front fascia and flush-mounted composite headlamps. Engine choices are a 4.3-liter fuel-injected V-6 or a 5.0-liter V-8.

Volvo scales back plans for new Uddevalla plant

By Stig Bjorklund
Staff Correspondent

GOTHENBURG, Sweden.—Volvo has scaled back its ambitions for its future plant in Uddevalla, about 30 miles north of here.

Instead of a complete manufacturing plant on the site of the present shipyard, there will be only a final assembly plant—at least initially.

The product will be Volvo 740 cars with painted bodies coming from the main Gothenburg plant. The original plan had been to use the Uddevalla plant to increase production capacity for the 240.

The decision eliminates the need for a body and paint shop which had been a stumbling block because of emissions (Automotive News, Jan. 13). Volvo President Pehr G. Gyllenhammar, in an official statement, described the change in plans as the only way to break the deadlock with the government board and get anything started in Uddevalla.

Volvo could wait no longer for the necessary permits regarding emissions from the future plant's paint shop, he said.

Since several parties have been arguing about which maximum level could be acceptable, and since the bids have been so far apart, any official figure would inevitably have resulted in an appeal from some of the parties involved. The risk, therefore, was that the matter would drag on for months.

Apart from taking a load off the Volvo Torslanda plant here, which after more than 20 years is due for a modernization anyhow, the change of plans for Uddevalla means the Volvo production roof is going to stay at some 300,000 cars a year for some time to come.

Nothing is promised about a future expansion of the Uddevalla plant, which is now going to need a maximum of 1,000 persons instead of 1,200 as was planned.

When full production of 80,000 cars a year is going to be reached also remains an open question. Production start in Uddevalla is now scheduled for April, 1988, instead of summer, 1987, as was originally planned. Recruiting will start this spring.

Mid-January count is best since 1979

Sales spurt to a seven-year peak

By Jenny L. King
Detroit Reporter

New-car sales in mid-January soared to the highest level recorded in seven years.

Nudged by special interest rates on several domestic models, new-car buyers returned to the showrooms Jan. 11-20 and did enough buying to push sales 30,000 above the year-earlier period, making this year's tally the strongest since the pre-recession year of 1979.

The mid-January count of 199,246 was up 18.13 percent from 168,668 in 1985. It also was an increase of 13.88 percent over the 174,954 sales reported Jan. 1-10. Year-to-date sales were up 4.08 percent, to 374,200 from 359,537.

American Motors was the only domestic maker that failed to match or surpass its 1985 level. In fact, AMC's sales estimate of 1,550 was the lowest of any company's total for the period and was off 50.40 percent from 3,125 a year earlier. AMC earned just 0.78 percent of the period market, down from 1.85 percent in 1985.

General Motors reported domestic sales of 117,014, an increase of 18.18 percent from 99,016. Ford Motor Co. was up 20.98 percent, to 49,616 from 41,012. Chrysler's 24,577 sales were up 13.25 percent from 21,702.

Volkswagen, up 24.68 percent to 1,637 from 1,313, had the best year-to-year sales gain of any of the domestics in terms of percentage of increase. Honda was up 13.72 percent, to 2,843 from 2,500, and Nissan reported first-year sales of 2,009.

GM's share of the market for the period crept up to 58.73 percent from 58.70 percent. Ford claimed 24.90 percent compared with 24.32 percent in 1985. Chrysler was off to 12.34 percent from 12.87 percent.

Honda slipped to 1.42 percent from 1.48 percent while VW was up to 0.82 percent from 0.78 percent. Nissan earned 1.01 percent of the mid-January market, and AMC dropped to 0.78 percent from 1.85 percent.

Year-to-year make sales were up for 12 of the 15 makes on the charts a year ago.

Three showed losses: AMC was down an estimated 41.67 percent; Renault, 51.67 percent, and Buick, 7.16 percent.

Plymouth was up 22.18 percent; Chrysler, 10.44 percent, and Dodge, 8.09 percent. Ford climbed 24.63 percent; Mercury, 16.32 percent, and Lincoln, 5.46 percent.

Pontiac, up 86.30 percent, nearly doubled its year-ago total. Oldsmobile was up 28.62 percent; Chevrolet, 6.27 percent, and Cadillac, 2.91 percent. VW was up 24.68 percent, and Honda was up 13.72 percent.

There were eight selling days in the period both years. This year's daily rate of 24,906 was up 18.13 percent from 21,084 in 1985.

Top nameplates for Jan. 11-20 were: Cavalier, 12,820; Celebrity, 10,556; Cutlass Ciera, 10,317; Escort, 9,797, and Tempo, 8,444.

DOMESTIC SALES

	Jan. 11-20, 1986	Jan. 11-20, 1985
Renault Alliance-Encore	1,375†	2,825†
AMC	175†	300†
AMERICAN MOTORS	1,550†	3,125†
Chrysler	7,307	6,616
Plymouth	8,355	6,838
Dodge	8,915	8,248
CHRYSLER CORP.	24,577	21,702
Ford	34,224	27,461
Mercury	11,798	10,143
Lincoln	3,594	3,408
FORD MOTOR CO.	49,616	41,012
Buick	18,181	19,584
Cadillac	6,719	6,529
Chevrolet	40,521	38,129
Oldsmobile	29,416	22,870
Pontiac	27,177	11,904
GENERAL MOTORS	117,014	99,016
VOLKSWAGEN	1,637	1,313
HONDA	2,843	2,500
NISSAN	2,009	0
U.S. INDUSTRY TOTAL	199,246	168,668

†—Estimate

General Tire offers life-of-car warranty

By David Nypaver
Crain News Service

MARCO ISLAND, Fla.—General Tire has introduced a premium all-season radial for the aftermarket with a lifetime guarantee.

The Ameri-Classic steel-belted radial is guaranteed as long as the purchaser owns the vehicle, with a free replacement for road hazard damage during the first 30,000 miles. It will go on sale in April.

General Tire said the tire features a dual-compound tread formula. It said the center compound allows for better traction and smoother ride, while a harder compound in the shoulder improves handling and resists abrasion during cornering.

The tire also has belt-edge overlays that prevent the buildup of damaging internal heat, an inner liner to reduce rapid wear from underinflation and an internal coating of puncture sealant.

General Tire originally advertised the new radial with a 60,000-mile guarantee but after further testing decided to make the guarantee last the life of the vehicle.

The new tire will be available in 12 sizes. Ray Evans, senior vice president of sales and marketing, expects that 25 percent of its sales will come from customers who buy a new car and have the tires switched to the Ameri-Classic.

General Tire has also introduced a V-rated version of its XP-2000 high-performance tire and a medium truck-tire line, the Ameri-Steel IV.

Big brake fluid reservoirs to stay

WASHINGTON.—NHTSA has abandoned a rule that would have allowed smaller brake fluid reservoirs in trucks over 10,000 pounds GVW.

The agency had proposed use of the smaller reservoirs if the vehicles were equipped with self-adjusting brakes and a brake indicator lamp that is activated by low brake fluid.

NHTSA said, however, that after analyzing comments and available data, it concluded that "smaller brake fluid reservoirs would unnecessarily result in an added safety risk without any compensating safety benefits."

Nissan first to move cars on U.S. ship

Nissan Motor Co. will become the first Japanese auto maker to use U.S.-registered vessels to ship vehicles to North America.

The auto maker announced it will charter ships owned by Marine Transport Lines, Inc. (MTL), Secaucus, N.J.

Nissan Motor Car Carrier, a Nissan subsidiary which operates seven carrying vessels, will sign a three-year contract with MTL to transport 30,000 to 40,000 cars annually to the U.S. and Canada beginning next year, a Nissan spokesman said.

MTL will build a freighter capable of carrying 4,000 vehicles. MTL will start the service in the second half of 1987, said company Chairman James Rand.

The carrier will be built by Sumitomo Ship Builders in Japan for an estimated $20 million, he said.

It will carry the U.S. flag and be crewed by U.S. citizens.

Rand said MTL had been negotiating with Nissan for almost two years and that its contract with the company calls for it to transport vehicles around the world.

Toyota Motor Corp. uses U.S. vessels to ship automotive components to the U.S.

Three American carrier lines transport parts destined for New United Motor Mfg., Inc. (NUMMI), in Fremont, Calif.

Toyota announced it is studying the possibility of using U.S. ships to carry about 10 percent of its exports—or 60,000 units—to the U.S.

The U.S. has been dissatisfied with Japanese auto manufacturers' use of Japanese ships rather than American vessels in exporting their vehicles to the U.S. The Japanese are said to prefer their own ships because of their lower rates.

While MTL is the immediate beneficiary of increased U.S. pressure on the Japanese to open up the car-carrier business, U.S. Congressional sources say they will not slacken their efforts to open the market further.

The sources said hearings on the matter will likely be held in early March in the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. Its chairman, Rep. Walter B. Jones, North Carolina Democrat, has a bill pending that would require that at least half of all Japanese cars exported to the U.S. be transported by U.S. vessels.

In the Senate, Frank Murkowski, Alaska Republican, is expected to try to attach a resolution calling for negotiated opening of the market to trade reciprocity legislation sponsored by Senator John Danforth, Missouri Republican.

Danforth has led the Senate's efforts to open up Japanese markets to U.S. competition.

Many in the shipping industry believe that Korean auto makers will also ship vehicles on their national carriers. Hyundai currently has orders in place for two car carriers to handle its exports.

In a reversal of the situation, General Motors recently signed a contract with a non-U.S. car carrier to handle its imports from Daewoo Motors in Korea. GM said that it "preferred to work with people already in the business."

Japanese auto makers have given the same reason to explain their preference for Japanese carriers.

Production Page

U.S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 25, 1986	Week Ended Jan. 26, 1985	Week Ended Jan. 18, 1986	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1, to Jan. 26, 1985	Jan. 1, to Jan. 25, 1986
AMERICAN MOTORS	2,750	0	0	2,750	7,768	2,750
Renault Total	2,750	0	0	2,750	7,768	2,750
Alliance	2,375	0	0	2,375	4,932	2,375
Encore	375	0	0	375	2,836	375
CHRYSLER CORP.	29,600	22,105	29,631	102,820	90,769	102,820
Plymouth Total	8,800	6,307	8,384	29,890	26,233	29,890
Horizon	2,900	1,901	3,097	10,861	9,331	10,861
Reliant	4,500	2,906	3,859	13,975	11,273	13,975
Caravelle	1,200	1,093	1,242	4,393	4,453	4,393
Gran Fury	200	407	186	661	1,176	661
Chrysler Total	10,800	8,241	10,834	37,132	32,211	37,132
LeBaron	2,700	2,216	2,658	9,195	8,677	9,195
LeBaron GTS	2,100	1,029	2,466	7,614	4,885	7,614
Laser	1,000	1,250	1,052	3,521	4,308	3,521
New Yorker/E-Class	1,400	1,334	1,489	5,202	4,892	5,202
Fifth Avenue	3,600	2,412	3,169	11,600	9,449	11,600
Dodge Total	10,000	7,557	10,413	35,798	32,325	35,798
Omni	3,100	1,974	3,123	10,897	10,074	10,897
Aries	2,200	2,216	2,101	8,003	8,561	8,003
Daytona	1,000	841	1,025	3,530	3,075	3,530
Dodge 600	1,400	1,409	1,706	5,470	5,135	5,470
Lancer	2,000	707	2,048	6,419	3,735	6,419
Diplomat	300	410	410	1,479	1,745	1,479
FORD MOTOR	35,185	33,942	34,007	113,598	144,406	113,598
Ford Division	23,892	21,996	23,101	76,731	94,174	76,731
Escort	7,944	6,677	8,258	26,417	24,825	26,417
Mustang	4,202	3,088	4,209	13,558	12,517	13,558
LTD	0	3,473	0	0	20,076	0
Taurus	3,438	0	2,939	9,828	0	9,828
Thunderbird	3,619	3,008	3,655	12,212	13,949	12,212
Crown Victoria	0	1,534	0	0	7,167	0
EXP	0	510	0	0	1,951	0
Ter...	4,689	3,656	4,040	14,716	13,689	14,716
L-M Division	11,293	11,946	10,906	36,867	50,232	36,867
Mercury Total	7,603	8,481	7,221	24,642	37,450	24,642
Lynx	1,506	1,538	1,620	5,130	6,376	5,130
Capri	388	287	381	1,680	1,421	1,680
Marquis	0	1,685	0	0	8,954	0
Sable	1,710	0	1,451	4,890	0	4,890
Cougar	2,420	2,507	2,419	7,996	11,611	7,996
Grand Marquis	0	1,098	0	0	4,770	0
Topaz	1,579	1,366	1,350	4,946	4,318	4,946
Lincoln Total	3,690	3,465	3,685	12,225	12,782	12,225
Continental	410	630	410	1,492	2,313	1,492
Lincoln	2,769	2,454	2,765	9,174	9,054	9,174
Mark VI/VII	511	381	510	1,559	1,415	1,559
GENERAL MOTORS	99,106	94,040	96,419	330,419	387,619	330,419
Buick Total	16,223	19,515	17,019	58,207	77,585	58,207
Skylark	0	2,357	0	0	9,166	0
Skyhawk	1,862	1,441	1,937	6,478	7,521	6,478
Somerset	2,140	2,677	1,998	7,125	8,273	7,125
Century	5,478	4,730	5,952	20,760	16,849	20,760
Regal	1,124	2,756	1,158	3,006	10,630	3,006
LeSabre/Electra (rwd)	204	4,240	205	787	14,853	787
LeSabre (fwd)	1,760	0	1,526	4,815	0	4,815
Riviera	640	1,314	319	1,410	4,748	1,410
Electra (fwd)	3,015	0	3,908	13,826	5,545	13,826
Cadillac Total	7,262	7,751	5,659	19,233	29,471	19,233
Cimarron	435	424	483	1,494	1,858	1,494
Seville	484	941	254	1,082	3,194	1,082
Eldorado	691	1,780	371	1,532	5,976	1,532
Cadillac (rwd)	1,560	1,256	899	2,853	4,856	2,853
DeVille (fwd)	4,092	3,350	3,652	12,272	13,587	12,272
Chevrolet Total	33,839	32,502	34,417	116,976	138,367	116,976
Chevette	2,801	2,837	2,643	9,446	12,745	9,446
Cavalier	9,529	8,124	9,243	32,398	38,391	32,398
Celebrity	5,531	5,596	5,869	20,127	20,984	20,127
Camaro	4,968	3,552	4,953	16,741	18,797	16,741
Citation	0	1,537	0	0	6,213	0
Malibu/El Camino	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monte Carlo	2,695	2,580	2,725	9,231	9,546	9,231
Chevrolet	8,315	8,276	8,984	29,033	28,825	29,033
Corvette	0	0	0	0	2,866	0
Oldsmobile Total	24,012	22,492	23,266	80,629	95,800	80,629
Omega	0	0	0	0	0	0
Firenza	993	1,477	954	3,451	6,042	3,451
Cutlass Supreme	5,001	3,944	4,659	15,225	15,482	15,225
Cutlass Ciera	6,300	7,035	6,649	24,234	28,696	24,234
88/98 (rwd)	480	4,774	510	2,419	21,458	2,419
88 (fwd)	4,336	0	4,070	13,775	0	13,775
Olds 98	3,333	1,941	3,137	10,118	10,191	10,118
Calais	3,110	2,257	3,059	10,399	10,394	10,399
Toronado	459	1,064	228	1,008	3,537	1,008
Pontiac Total	17,770	11,780	16,058	55,374	46,396	55,374
Acadian**	0	304	316	535	555	535
2000 Sunbird	2,939	2,578	3,126	9,954	11,077	9,954
1000	605	744	727	2,040	2,410	2,040
Firebird	2,652	1,950	2,559	8,941	10,046	8,941
Phoenix	0	0	0	0	0	0
6000	2,823	430	2,604	8,987	1,269	8,987
Grand Prix/Bonneville	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parisienne	2,001	1,579	2,007	7,770	5,568	7,770
Fiero	2,400	2,400	0	2,400	7,202	2,400
Grand Am	4,350	1,795	4,719	14,747	8,269	14,747
HONDA	3,750	2,581	3,832	12,544	12,258	12,544
NISSAN	1,792	0	1,791	7,187	0	7,187
NUMMI*	1,900	200	1,900	6,100	800	6,100
VOLKSWAGEN	2,350	1,671	2,148	7,653	7,446	7,653
Total Cars, U.S.	176,433	154,539	169,728	583,071	651,066	583,071
Total Cars, Canada	20,800	17,487	20,494	66,448	75,542	66,448
N. American Cars	197,233	172,026	190,222	649,519	726,608	649,519
N. American Trucks	88,435	74,582	90,180	301,466	301,444	301,466
North American Cars and Trucks	285,668	246,608	280,402	950,985	1,028,052	950,985

*—Revised estimate.
**—All Acadians are built for sale in Canada.
Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.

Car production rises; week hits 1986 high

By Kathy Boyer
Detroit Reporter

U.S. auto makers estimated last week's production at 176,433 cars, the highest total since the week ended Dec. 14, when 182,811 were assembled.

Last week target was 3.95 percent more than the previous week's 169,728 and 14.17 percent more than the year-ago week's 154,539.

Companies shared last week's estimated production as follows: General Motors, 56.16 percent; Ford Motor Co., 19.94 percent; Chrysler Corp., 16.78 percent; Honda of America Mfg. Co., 2.13 percent; American Motors, 1.56 percent; Volkswagen of America, 1.33 percent; New United Motor Mfg. Co., U.S.A., 1.08 percent, and Nissan Motor Mfg. Co., 1.02 percent.

GM announced it will cut production and lay off some 350 employes at its Arlington (Tex.) plant on Feb. 10. A company spokesman said the reason for the cutback was softening demand for the Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme and Chevrolet Monte Carlo.

GM notified workers that there are no current plans to replace the plant's aging rear-wheel-drive product line with a front-wheel-drive (GM10) product.

GM also announced plans to cut production 18.8 percent on Feb. 10 at its Bowling Green (Ky.) plant, which assembles the Chevrolet Corvette.

American Motors' Kenosha plant assembled its first cars of the year last week. The plant had been down for several weeks for inventory adjustment.

But the plant is closed again for the next two weeks because of slow sales.

When the plant reopens on Feb. 10, the daily production rate will be reduced from 550 units to 430, idling 875 people.

Ford slated Saturday (Jan. 25) overtime at its Kansas City and Atlanta plants.

Chrysler scheduled Saturday overtime at the following plants: Newark, Del.; St. Louis (No. 2), and Jefferson (Detroit).

Chrysler's Belvidere (Ill.), Newark and St. Louis plants are also scheduled to operate two nine-hour daily shifts this week (Jan. 27).

Canadian output highest of year

Last week, Canadian car and truck makers scheduled their highest production of any week this year.

The estimated build of 20,800 cars was 1.49 percent more than the previous week's 20,494 and 18.95 percent above the year-ago week's 17,487.

Last week's estimated output of 18,826 trucks—the highest of any week this year—was 1.43 percent more than the previous week's 18,561 and 22.25 percent more than the year-ago week's 15,399.

Trucks extend 1986 lead

Truck production is extending its year-to-date lead over 1985.

So far this year, 238,275 units have been assembled, 2.05 percent more than the 233,483 completed last year at this time.

The gain during the previous week was 0.89 percent.

Last week, the makers estimated production of 69,609 trucks, 2.81 percent below the previous week's 71,619, but 17.62 percent more than the year-ago week's 59,183.

General Motors' medium- and heavy-duty truck plant in Pontiac resumes production today (Jan. 27) after being idle for one week due to changes in market demand.

GM slated overtime Saturday (Jan. 25) at the following plants: Lorain, Ohio; Lordstown, Ohio, and Baltimore.

Ford scheduled Saturday (Jan. 25) overtime at its Twin Cities and Lorain, Ohio, plants.

CANADIAN CAR

	Week Ended Jan. 25, 1986	Week Ended Jan. 26, 1985	Week Ended Jan. 18, 1986	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1, to Jan. 26, 1985	Jan. 1, to Jan. 25, 1986
AMERICAN MOTORS	410	598	410	1,227	966	1,227
FORD MOTOR	11,645	9,124	11,562	38,610	42,894	38,610
GENERAL MOTORS	8,520	7,540	8,301	25,874	30,872	25,874
VOLVO	225	225	221	737	810	737
Total Cars, Canada	20,800	17,487	20,494	66,448	75,542	66,448

U.S. TRUCK☆

	Week Ended Jan. 25, 1986	Week Ended Jan. 26, 1985	Week Ended Jan. 18, 1986	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1, to Jan. 26, 1985	Jan. 1, to Jan. 25, 1986
CHEVROLET	24,148	19,174	25,580	84,536	83,549	84,536
DODGE	0	3,727	0	0	14,138	0
FORD	28,061	21,152	29,003	95,975	77,513	95,975
GMC	7,051	5,974	7,135	24,529	22,953	24,529
INTERNATIONAL	1,495	908	1,498	4,972	5,245	4,972
JEEP	5,800	3,662	5,902	19,634	14,094	19,634
NISSAN	1,004	2,436	451	1,457	8,251	1,457
AM GENERAL	50	50	50	172	180	172
MISCELLANEOUS	2,000	2,100	2,000	7,000	7,560	7,000
Total Trucks, U.S.	69,609	59,183	71,619	238,275	233,483	238,275

CANADIAN TRUCK

	Week Ended Jan. 25, 1986	Week Ended Jan. 26, 1985	Week Ended Jan. 18, 1986	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1, to Jan. 26, 1985	Jan. 1, to Jan. 25, 1986
CHRYSLER	9,080	7,783	8,778	31,021	32,000	31,021
FORD	3,600	3,491	3,604	12,059	12,661	12,059
GENERAL MOTORS	5,976	3,974	6,010	19,543	22,594	19,543
INTERNATIONAL	170	151	169	568	706	568
Total Trucks, Canada	18,826	15,399	18,561	63,191	67,961	63,191
N. American Trucks	88,435	74,582	90,180	301,466	301,444	301,466

☆—Includes window van production. *— Estimated
Jeep includes commercial only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.
Miscellaneous includes estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz, etc.
Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.